

REMARKS

The above amendments and the following remarks are fully and completely responsive to the Office Action dated December 21, 2004. By this Amendment, claims 6, 8 and 9 have been canceled and claims 1-3 and 10-18 have been amended. Accordingly, claims 1-5, 7 and 10-18 are pending in this application. In the outstanding Office Action, claims 1-3 and 8-13 were objected to for informalities; claims 1, 2, 4 and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b); and claims 1, 5, 8, 15, 17 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) (three separate rejections). Claims 3 and 9-13 were allowed. Claims 6, 14 and 16 were indicated as containing allowable subject matter. No new matter has been added. Claims 1-5, 7 and 10-18 are presented for reconsideration.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 3 and 10-13 are allowable over the prior art of record.

Claims 6, 14 and 16 were indicated as containing allowable subject matter but were objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim. Claim 6 has been canceled and claims 14 and 16 have been amended to place these in independent form. Therefore, Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to claims 14 and 16.

Claim Objections

Claims 1-3 and 8-13 were objected to for the informalities set forth in the Office Action dated December 21, 2004. Applicants have canceled claims 8 and 9 and

amended claims 1-3 and 10-13 to correct these informalities. Accordingly, Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to claims 1-3 and 10-13.

35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1, 2, 4 and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Sato et al. (JP 6-69750, "Sato"). This rejection has been rendered moot by the amendment of claims 1 and 2 to include the limitation of claim 6, which the Office Action indicated as allowable. Claims 4 and 7 depend from claim 1. Therefore, Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 2, 4 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1, 8, 17 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Satoh et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,874,866, "Satoh") in view of Selmeier (U.S. Patent No. 6,747,530).

Claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sato et al. (JP 6-69750, "Sato") in view of Flowers et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,246,148, "Flowers").

Claim 15 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Satoh in view of Selmeier as applied to claim 8 and further in view of Flowers.

These rejections have been rendered moot by the amendment of claim 1 to include the limitations of claim 6, which was indicated as allowable; by the cancellation of claim 8; and the amendment of claims 15, 17 and 18 to depend from claim 14, which

was also indicated as allowable. Claim 5 depends from claim 1. Therefore, Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1, 5, 15, 17 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) (3 different rejections).

Conclusion

Applicants' amendments and remarks have overcome the objections and rejections set forth in the Office Action dated December 21, 2004. Specifically, Applicants' amendments to claims 1-3 and 10-13 overcome the objection to these claims. Applicants' amendments and remarks have distinguished claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 15, 17 and 18 from the cited prior art. Applicants' amendment of claims 14 and 16 overcomes the objection of these claims. Accordingly, claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 and 14-18 are in condition for allowance. Therefore, Applicants request consideration and allowance of claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7 and 14-18. Claims 3 and 10-13 were allowed.

Applicants submit that the application is now in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes the application is not in condition for allowance, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner contact the undersigned attorney by telephone if it is believed that such contact will expedite the prosecution of the application.

In the event that this paper is not considered to be timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge payment for any additional fees which may be required with respect to this paper to our Deposit Account No. 01-2300, making reference to attorney docket number 025720-00015.

Respectfully submitted,
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